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often do we find refuge from our cares? Thou potent restorer of the decayed energies of man!—in thee old age renews the pleasures of youth, for thy vivifying fumes ascend to the pericranium—nourishing and renewing the intellect as the dew of Heaven fertilizes the earth! Thou parent of blank verse! Thou last best gift of Heaven to way-worn man! without thee the wild Indian could not enjoy his being; without thee he would be a coward in war; he would cry out where is my courage? where is my strength? And the wise man would say, thou canst not be courageous or strong without tobacco, and he would go away disappointed to his tent. Even the warriors of Europe owe much of their prowess to thy invigorating influence. To thee and thy compatriot (the potatoe) we owe all that ennobles us as men, "health, strength, courage, and beauty." Go and convince the fair sex of the fatuity of their conduct, in not using it themselves, and prohibiting it to others—Thou soul of courage, and thou nerve of man, farewell for three long months—farewell.

AN IRISHMAN.

THE REPLY.

Woe unto thee, thou ill favoured weed! by thee, how often is our precious time wasted—thou potent enemy to the vigour of youth! By thee old age is reminded of its weakness, for thy stupifying fumes damp or extinguish the last sparks of youthful vigour, poisoning our faculties as the foggy winds prevent the fertility of the earth! Thou mortal enemy to true poetry, and parent of stupidity; thou last worst gift of foreigners to enervate our countrymen! Without thee the wild Indian would enjoy the effects of his industry; without thee he would be valiant in war; he would cry out, behold my courage! and the wise man would answer him saying, thou canst be courageous and strong, since thou hast ceased smoking, and he would go away well pleased to his tent. Even the warriors of Europe begin to be cowardly by means of thy enervating influence.

To thee and thy associate, whiskey, we owe all that degrades us as men, sickness, cowardice, weakness, laziness and pallid countenance. Begone from the society of females, where thou sometimes intrudest—Thou death of *Hila** begone for ever, thou miscreant, begone!

FLORA.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

FISRT IMPRESSIONS FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES

ON the sixteenth of May, a Portugueze vessel, from Pernambucca to Liverpool, delayed by contrary winds, cast anchor about three miles from shore, in a neighbouring bay: It was the first place she had stopped at since her departure from South America, and she was immediately visited by several fishermen and peasants, whom curiosity attracted to see the crew. These men returned with such a singular account of the strange appearance, the language and dress of these foreigners, that I also determined to visit them, and accordingly, at twelve o'clock the next day, I proceeded to the vessel in a four-oared boat, accompanied by five young gentlemen. The day was remarkably fine, and the countenances of my youthful company, during our little voyage, were lit up with all the gaiety and animation that brilliant sunshine and grand scenery could confer on innocence and health. As we approached the vessel, a groupe of sailors were leaning over the side, gazing at us with the most earnest curiosity; and their black plaitted hair, their large dark eyes, their deep swarthy hue, with the long knives stuck in their girdles, all contributed to give them such an assassin-like aspect, that my terror for a moment subdued every other feeling, and shame alone prevented me from ordering the boat to row back. I saw my companions, one by one, climb up the vessel's side, and at length, not without considerable apprehension, I ventured on deck, where we were instantly surrounded by the sailors, who with the kindest looks and gestures, endeavoured to evince their pleasure at our visit; my uneasiness vanished; I found that I had mistaken national costume for actual villany, and mere colour for dark expression. They had an Irishman on

* The Goddess of Vivacity.

board, who was returning from Rio Janeiro, and who acted as their pilot and interpreter; by whose means we conversed with the captain. What particularly attracted their attention was, the brother of one of my companions, a fine boy, about seven years old; they took off his cap, they felt his flaxen hair, and loaded him with the most endearing caresses. The first and second mates were broken emigrants from Portugal, and both extremely handsome; the elder, who seemed about twenty-four, after several expressions of kindness, took out a guitar of a large form, and louder tone than any I had before seen or heard, and seating himself on deck, began to play a Brazilian air, and never shall I forget the impression it made on me; the light and fantastic measure, so different from our musical combinations, the tones of the instrument so new, so pleasing to my ear, the emotions of the performer's expressive features, as his fingers swept through every variation of the tune, filled me with sensations that shall remain in my mind a lasting treasure for reflection.

The performer expressed a wish to see my young companions dance, who immediately assenting, began a Scottish reel of four, and kept admirable time to a beautiful fandango tune. The crew collected in a circle around them; delight and satisfaction were pictured in every sun-burnt face. "*Star bon! star bon! benito Irelandese!*" reiterated from every voice. The dance concluded, we got into our boat; the whole crew saluted us with three cheers; we returned it, *con amore*, and as long as memory shall exert her faculty in my mind, I shall think with delight on the Brazilian fandango, and the foreign guitar. L.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

PERMIT me, sir, to take up a few pages of your valuable Magazine in drawing the attention of some of your readers to a subject not generally understood, especially by those whose business and employment it is.

"A large and elegant bridge, forming a way over a broad and rapid river, is justly esteemed one of the noblest pieces of mechanism that man is capable of performing, and any attempts to advance the theory or practice, highly deserving the encouragement of the public."

As my profession is not that of an architect, very probably I should have been silent, had it not been from hearing and seeing every day, absurd things advanced on the subject.——I will not say a word of that *rickety* bridge near this town, on the Dublin road, which, if I am rightly informed, cost the public upwards of six hundred pounds sterling!!!—nor do I wish to wound the feelings of its architect, but rather to give him a friendly hint lest he fall into similar errors in his present construction.

When a bridge is deemed necessary to be built over a river, the first consideration is the plan of it, or what particular situation will contain a maximum of the advantages over the disadvantages.

The breadth of the river, the navigation upon it, and the velocity and depth of the stream, form considerations of great moment. In most cases, a wider part of the river ought rather to be chosen than a narrow one, especially if it is subject to great tides or floods; for the encreased velocity of the stream in the narrow part being again augmented by the further contraction of the breadth, will both incommode the navigation through the arches, undermine the piers, and endanger the whole bridge. With respect to the form of a bridge, strength, utility, and beauty, ought to be regarded and united, the chief of which lies in the arches.

In fixing on the number of arches, let an odd number always be taken, and few and large ones rather than many and smaller: for thus we shall have not only fewer foundations and piers to make, but fewer arches and centres, which will produce great savings in the expense.

The elliptical arch is in general the best form for most bridges, as it can be made of any height to the same span, or of any span to the same height, while at the same time its haunches are sufficiently strong and elevated above the water, even when it is flat at top—a property which the